

Harvest - Tide

and other Poems



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HARVEST-TIDE

How gladly when the early dawn
Gives promise of the brighter day
The tiller of the earth goes forth
To gather, in the sunny ray
The fruitful yield of ripened grain.
No fears of loss his hopes deride,
All energy is bent to make
The most of joyous harvest-tide.

With steady sweep the curvèd scythe
Cleaves softly through the laden grain,
And gently bears the fruit to earth
Upon whose breast the seed had lain,
Whose warm embrace sustained its growth
'Mid soothing showers and sun's bright glow,
Till, perfected—the golden ears
All bent, their glorious increase show.

And when the harvesting is o'er,
When filled the barn, and bare the earth
When silent is the insect hum
And flown the birds of blithesome mirth—
When frosts the setting sun await
The upturned clods of earth to break,
While silver stars in silence shine
And unassuming witness make,

Then from the reaper's gladden'd heart
Outbursts the song of gratitude
Contentment lightens every task
And brightens winter's solitude.
The promises of God fulfilled
From year to year for him abide,
And in the Everlasting Arms
He waits the final Harvest-tide.

MY MOTHER

My first faint smile to you I gave,
And many, many smiles
Until at last I knew you were my mother
And you, my mother, smiled. So smiled.

Then while on you my very life depended
Your love upon my purer weakness leaned,
I, an unwitting witness of that moment
When, spent, the body nears the shore of spirit
And presently, removing all earth's sordidness
A fragrance, as of Heaven's own gracious wafting,
Bade you return to life, and then my cry
In harsher measure, called you from your pain,
And e'en through sleep that would not be denied
You guarded me, while yet I knew it not.

And when at last, I knew you were my mother
My hands, like little prayers I used to raise
And you would kiss them. And then my baby hands
You'd place at rest across your tired temples,
And though your tears my infant wonder waken'd
Enough for me that love beamed through your eyes.

Much have I suffered since those early years,
Not finding what I sought wherein I searched
Or finding, lost what I'll ne'er find again.
Yet still I raise my hands, and still your love
Makes me forget my troubles as of yore.
The eyes which once in confidence sought yours
Now scarce can bear the light, but this I know—
The Love which, giving all, gave us each other,
Unites us still, and Heav'n is ours together.

"SURSUM CORDA"

O Love, beyond the need of creed
In meeting every human need
We lift our hearts to Thee.
For in Thy spirit we obtain
Dominion over self and gain
The truth which makes us free.

Eternal Strength we lean upon
In Perfect Mind our rest is won
And discord disappears.
Be ours to own no other sway
To find our night dissolve in day—
Thy rainbow, through our tears.

As those who looking for the morn
Keep watch and pray nor heed the scorn
Of earthly mock or mortal bind,
We trust and much forgiven we try
Thy works to do, ourselves deny
And in denying, freedom find.

HOSANNA

They gathered around the Saviour
Those children in days gone by,
And His hands went forth in blessing
As each little head drew nigh.
O happy little children
For the Saviour bade them come
And wonderingly, they heard Him say
"Of such, my Father's home."

Once more the children gather
And palms and branches bring
To cast along His pathway
While they His praises sing.
Lord, grant to us, as children
To find, howe'er we rove
Thy beauty singing in our hearts
The beauty of Thy Love.

PRAYER

I pray, and if no answer, still I pray
For answer must there be, e'en as the dawn
Rewards the patience of the watchful stars.

I pray and know that if no answer come
So long hath been my night, that scarce my eyes
Could bear the light maybe that day would bring.

Yet still I pray and glory that the stars
Give promise of the beauty I shall see
Within the fuller light when night shall pass.

And then at last, prayer tired, I just look up
To that vast heaven, and sun and star alike
Receive the gratitude I feel at heart
And I no longer pray, but as the stars,
Shine on until the day shall bring me peace.

ON THE ROAD

Up through the cold clay and out of the mire
The plant gently presses its way.
And the burden which threatened to bruise in the dark
The angel of light bears away.

For today is the gleanings of yesterdays
'Tis your song the child is now singing,
And the bell which now bids you beware of the rock
Tolls for those who had not heard its ringing.

The little flower deepens its hold in the earth
As it feels the cool brace of the breeze,
And the sun looking down folds them both in its glow
And the wind lifts its taunt to the trees.

In night's chill watch, who glories in the stars
Shall find the sun disclose the levelled clod
And know, that trust, confessing helplessness
Through bruise or blame, yet lights his path to God.

THE LONG PULL

Dear Daddy, while yet there is light in the sky
Will you give me your hand and together we'll walk.
If you'll shorten your step, I'll be close at your side
And I'll not be a bother — I'll not even talk.

Though you can see far o'er the plain, my Daddy
Like you the big hills I can see,
And though the dark night blot out both hill and plain
The stars shine for you and for me.

Sometimes we were tired, you, of work, I, of play
And I longed for the voice of my Daddy to say
"Come you here, little son, and we'll share an hour's
cheer
Give me, first, a big hug, and I'll know you are near."

Yet you scarce seemed to hear when I bade you "Good
night"
Though my arms were just aching to hug you so
tight,
But now as we tramp side by side I'm so glad
For your fingers are warm, and you're surely my Dad.

Now lift me up quick, Daddy, lift me up quick
No matter what happens together we'll stick
For the love I have missed has come back with your
smile,
Lift me up and I'll kiss you, and rest me awhile.

THE LAUGH

When we're wrangling over trifles
And we reach up for our rifles
Comes the laugh.
When we think we're wisely speaking
While our self-conceit is shrieking
Lo-the laugh.

Bless the laugh which thus corrects us
Harms not, while its point dissects us
Hail the laugh.
May the squib which so surprises
In delightful rippling guises
Bless its source.

ON THE GREEN

There is much to imply in the use of four words
Such as "How do you do" or "Believe it or not"
But the four little words which I like best to hear
Are the skip's admonition that "We are still shot."

A really good bowler is oft near the mark
And there isn't much danger that he'll spoil the end,
And the wilder beginner may make a fine hit
But he hits the wrong bowl or he makes a bad end.

"Take the green," calls the skip, and you send your
bowl down
With a great deal more care, but you feel like a clown
For you come very near knocking out your shot bowl
But again comes the cheer that is good for the soul.

For the skip more sedately says "We are still shot"
And his turn comes to bowl, and he's bowled a whole
lot.
Though he carries the cat, he stays right on the dot
And the whole side may thunder that "We are still
shot."

THE GARDEN

In the garden of God the flowers are fair
And sweet is the fragrance the glad blossoms bear
And beauteous the blending of color they share
In the beautiful garden of God.

Could a weed footing find in that garden of flowers
In sunshine be tinted and share in the showers
And nod in the breeze with the lovely flower-towers
In the beautiful garden of God?

Oh, teach me, thou garden of beauty so rare
(Yet lose not thy sweetness in granting my prayer)
Could weed grow, oh, tell me, in garden so fair
The beautiful garden of God?

Does truth teach in silence the way that you grow
Do "better things" speak in the wake of your glow
Is a lesson denied if your fragrance must flow
In the beautiful garden of God?

Let the leaves that not wither their story unfold
Let the sweet buds unbosom the truths that they hold
While they bloom on in beauty that never grows old
In the beautiful garden of God.

And this is the truth that the garden taught me
That if He did not make it no weed could there be
And I trembled for fear a like fate I might see
In the beautiful garden of God.

And e'en as I trembled a flower raised its head
Shook the rain from its petals, as tears bravely shed
And its mission fulfilled, as life's lesson I read
In the beautiful garden of God.

Let His be the garden, ourselves be the flowers
His presence the sunshine, our striving the showers
The perfection of Jesus the promise of ours
In the beautiful garden of God.

Ours the vision that all His unlikeness is weed
His the bounty abiding, sufficing our need
All His, and yet ours as His image we plead
In the beautiful garden of God.

THE SAVING TRUTH

Wouldst't Thou, O Slave, a freeman be
Know then the truth that maketh free—
The light wherein the blind doth see
The shackle fall.

Naught that to God's man worketh wrong
Exists in Mind. To life belong
Love and goodwill—the angel's song
Peace—peace on earth.

Saved by the truth that Life is Mind,
We His unlikeness leave behind
And losing self, ourselves we find
And God our all.*

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HER GRACE

Not much she asked of Life, save that the day
Provide sufficient strength to bear its load,
Not much she asked, I say—yet in her heart
She wished that she might sometimes on the way
Rest where she stood, and bless in quiet thanks
For what of angel-help kept pace with her.
For all that she has woven into life
In weariness that seldom forced a sigh
Has been each day gleaned from the yesterday
That otherwise had been the darkest of dark days.

As Thou didst plant, so do Thou bless the blade
That grows toward Thy light, for it doth grow
Of that design in which Thou gav'st it birth—
Of that deep trust wherein a child makes claim
To understand the beauty that it feels.

MARY

A Story For Children

You couldn't help loving Mary. We became friends a year ago, just as she entered her tenth year. Each year had added to her loveliness and even when she wasn't smiling there was a look upon her face as if her smile were simply at rest.

In the summer she lived with her father and mother, a sister and two brothers at a little farm, in a big farmhouse, where many tame things ran wild and many wild things became tame and yet remained free. Mary believed in fairies and the fairies told her many secrets because, although so much bigger, like them she delighted in being kind.

No matter how tired you were, if at the close of the day Mary sought the comfort of your arms—to feel that dear head nestling at your shoulder seemed to make your own rest more complete.

A thick hedge ran at the front of the house and if you were very quiet at the time of sunset, after watching the chimney-swifts take their last flying frolic for the day, you would see a little wren flitting from one point to another on the hedge and presently the little mother-bird would enter at the place you knew the home nest was built. If you would listen Mary would tell you many other things delightful to know.

Later, the leaves would fall from the trees and the wind would sigh as if sorry and the sun would retire earlier so that the frost might have more time to brighten the stars. Then the fairies would leave the meadows and the woods and would follow Mary to the bungalow where the long winter was spent. Sometimes a fairy would alight on each shoulder, but so

full of glee were they, that neither could speak and yet their very presence would cause Mary to smile, for the same reason that a child will smile as it dreams of lovely Santa Claus. Was it that the good fairies suggested glad thoughts to Mary or that Mary's sweet fancy gave her thoughts fairy-shape I wonder. Isn't it grand to be able to wonder.

Sometimes at school Mary missed what her teacher was saying, because at the moment, one of the fairies had something to tell. Once during a lesson, a window was open at its top and a sparrow came and perched there for a minute, looking around, causing all eyes to be turned toward the cheery little visitor.

Of course, it was a laugh for everybody, but to our Mary it meant a lot more, for hadn't she fed the birds every day? And here, no doubt was one of those feathered friends who sometimes lined up in a row on the fence eager for breakfast. At those times, when Mary appeared with the food, chirp would answer chirp, as if to say "We knew Mary would not forget us." Remembering this, a smile lingered on her face and the fairy then knew that the time had come to tell Mary about the uncomplaining trustfulness of the birds, who in the winter, were never sure where their next meal was coming from, and Mary's smile grew lovelier as she listened and the little fairy would wistfully say "I wonder, Mary, which of us needs the other the more."

After the evening meal the family would gather in the large front room in the bungalow, and there was an hour or more of play, or study or make-believe. Presently, little Mary and her sister and brothers, betook themselves to the land of Nod, and fairy watch was kept. Let us leave her at rest. It is a better world when Mary smiles.

